

Israeli air strike June 5 left Russian-made Tupolev Tu-16 Badger bomber burning on the ground at an Egyptian airfield. —UPI

Massive Resupply Narrows Israeli Margin

Massive replacement of Egyptian aircraft destroyed by Israel during the 6-hr. air blitz in the Middle East conflict already has wiped out much of the Israeli margin in airpower. The fresh aircraft were enroute to Cairo prior to the June 5 outbreak of hostilities.

Since June 9, the day after the United Arab Republic accepted the United Nations cease fire, 40 MiG-21 fighter aircraft from Algeria and 60 from Czechoslovakia have arrived at UAR air fields. An additional 50 MiGs are believed to have arrived from other

East European countries, through which the Soviets may decide to disguise further military aid to the Arab nations. A squadron each of MiG-17s and Il-28s, withdrawn from UAR forces in Yemen, is also poised for action against Israel.

In addition, 40 communist military cargo aircraft landed at Cairo during the weekend of June 10-11, carrying equipment and supplies for the remnants of the Arab armies. A shipload of Soviet tanks from Algiers arrived at Alexandria at the same time.

The resupply operation, coupled with Israel's loss of 40 aircraft, or approximately 10% of its Air Force, has created a potentially explosive situation, particularly in light of increasing Arab calls for revenge. Israeli Air Force has remained on full combat alert.

The tension is partly a function of Israeli air strategy, which concentrated on methodically destroying enemy aircraft on the ground and hitting runways during the early hours of the war, to the exclusion of practically all other strategic targets. Hangars were virtually untouched. The reason was a desire to gain immediate air supremacy in preparation for tank battles in open desert, where air cover is the decisive factor.

As a result, 20 of the 25 air bases attacked by the Israelis during a 3-hr. period on the morning of June 5 were reactivated within a few days. Arab pilots for the most part were not hurt in the raids, since they failed to reach their aircraft before the attacks.

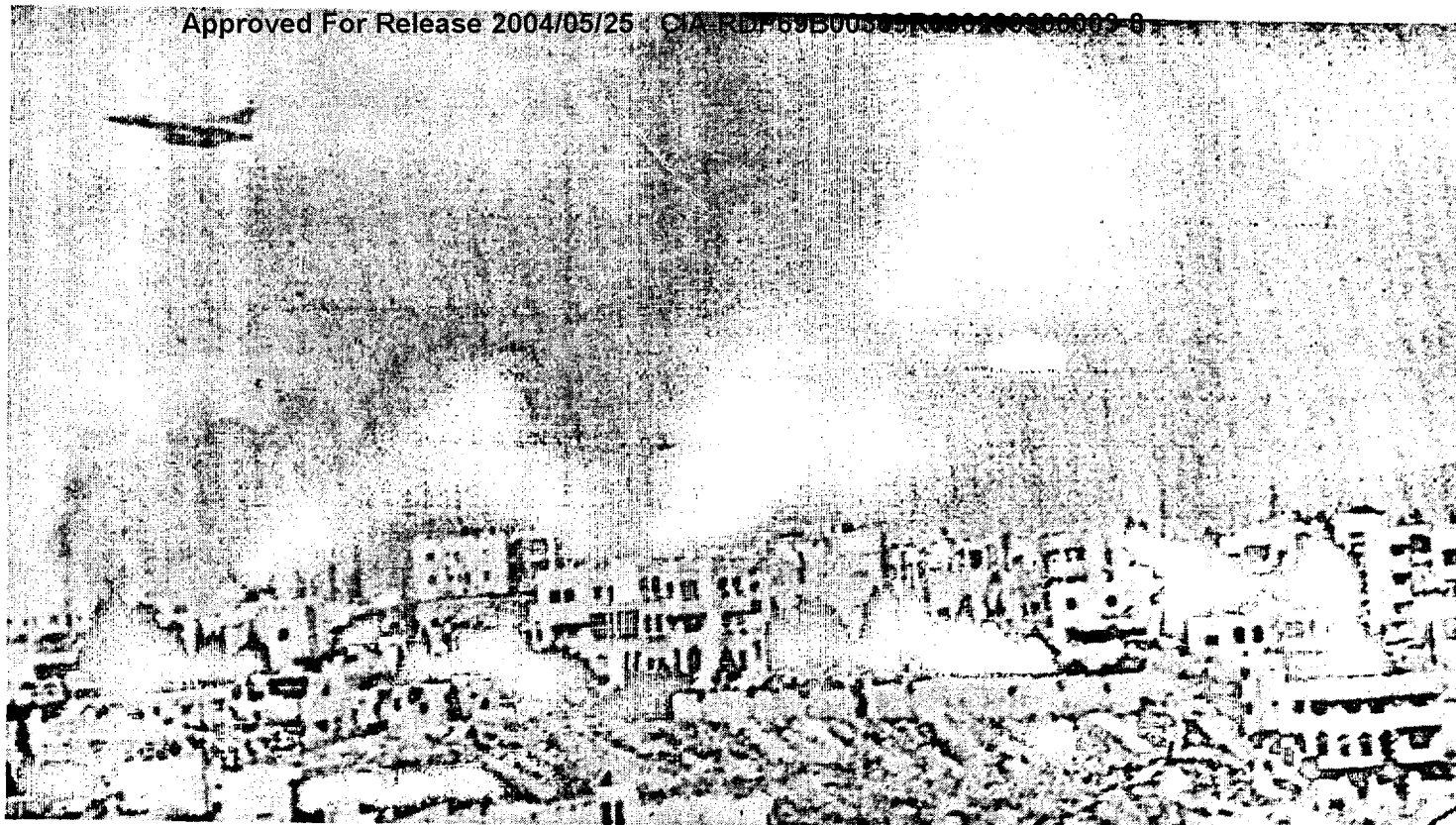
Nevertheless, the final authority in Middle Eastern affairs, regardless of

Israeli Aircraft Claims

Israel claimed that the following losses were sustained by Arab air forces during the first 60 hr. of active fighting in the war:

Type	Egypt	Syria	Jordan	Iraq	Total
Tu-16	30			1	31
Il-28	29	2			31
Il-14	24		5	5	34
An-12	8				8
Mi-6	10				10
Mi-4	1	3	3		7
MiG-21	100	32		13	145
MiG-19	29				29
MiG-15, 17	87	23			110
Su-7	14				14
Hunter			21	6	28
Unidentified	4				4
Total	336	60	29	25	451*

* Total also includes one Lebanese Hunter.



Smoke billows from Jordanian capital of Amman (above) as an Israeli Mirage jet attack fighter streaks past on first day of war. —UPI

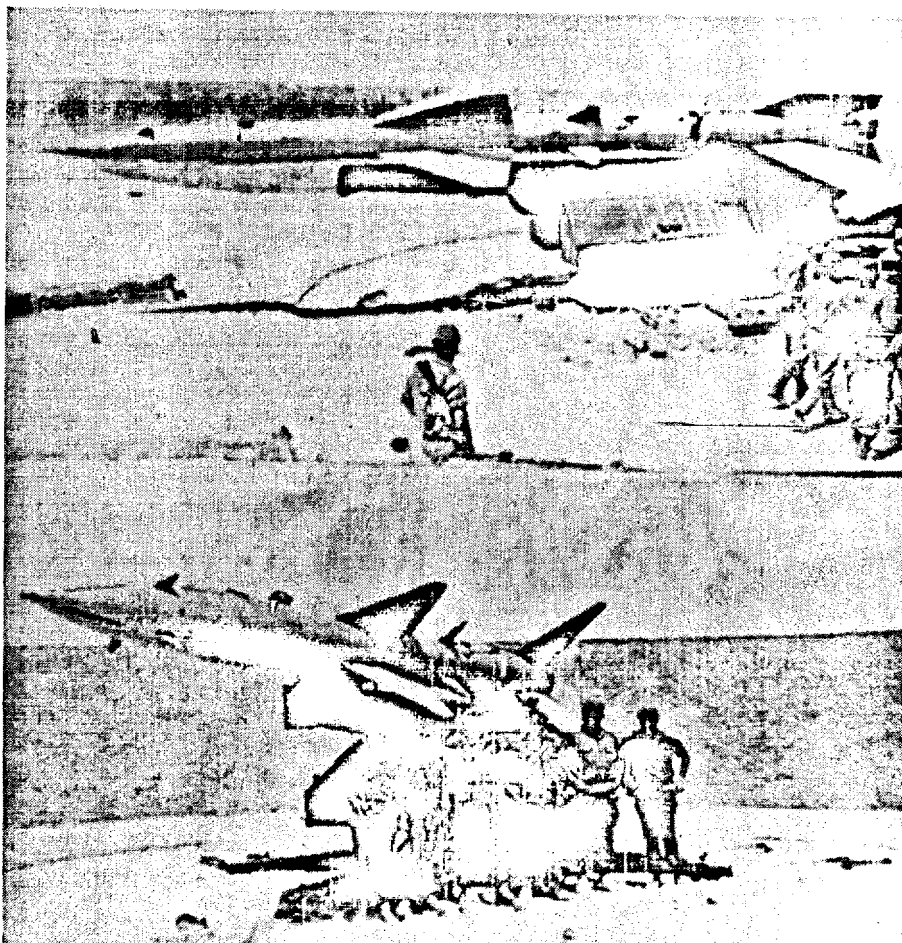
in Air Power

any action which may be taken by the U.S., the USSR or the UN, short of direct military intervention, remains the Israeli air force. Tel Aviv is certain that its crack pilots can easily repeat the lightning attacks of June 5 and destroy any new aircraft the Soviets may choose to supply.

At the same time, Israeli trade specialists are implementing plans to re-supply their own air force, in the face of a French refusal to continue sending them arms. Contingency plans have been in existence since the Israelis learned the value of informal supply channels during the first Arab war in 1949, when Western nations also refused to sell them arms.

Israeli pilots flew their Mach 2 Dassault Mirage 3C and slower Mystere 4A attack fighters in extremely low-speed, low-altitude approaches, destroying aircraft on the ground with conventional 20-mm and 30-mm guns. In some cases landing gear was dropped to retard speed. Small bombs were dropped to make runways inoperable. Only a single pass was permitted each pilot, and instructions were to inflict maximum damage during that pass (see table, p. 16).

As many as 40% of the Soviet-built aircraft spotted on the ground were dummies; and these were ignored by the



Israelis. Egyptian attempts to confuse the raiders were defeated by failure to paint fuel and exhaust stains in appropriate places on the dummies, and by invariably keeping aircraft in revetments, with the dummies scattered in unlikely places on the field.

Key Egyptian airfields were attacked from the west, a tactic that cost the Israelis several extra minutes in approach time but which succeeded in confusing UAR defenders, despite their 360-dog. Soviet-supplied radar systems.

No Soviet SA-2 surface-to-air missiles were fired against Israeli attack aircraft (AW&ST June 12, p. 25). However two Russian SAMs missed when they were fired against an Israeli Sikorsky S-58 helicopter rescuing a downed pilot in the Western Sinai early in the war.

Egypt's much-publicized 370-mi. single-stage Al Kahir and Al Zafir ballistic missiles, and the more advanced 600-mi. two-stage Al Ared, played no part in the war. Although UAR President Gamel Nasser said the missiles were in quantity production four years ago (AW&ST Sept. 9, 1963, p. 32), they were never deployed because of an inadequate guidance system. About 100 missiles were believed to have been built, each with a payload capacity of 1,000-2,000 lb.

Nasser's missiles were refinements of World War 2 German V2 rockets and were developed by German scientists. Nasser's decision to recognize East Germany in 1965 led to a break in relations with West Germany and the recall of the technicians, a political event which may have been decisive in denying Nasser a missile strike force.

Egypt nevertheless maintained a separate rocket force of 4,500 men, including civilian technicians.

Most Israeli air losses came from dense 37-mm, 57-mm and 90-mm anti-aircraft fire, primarily from the Egyptians. Some aircraft were also believed lost to small arms fire when their 200-ft. attack altitude brought them into rifle range.

Unique Manual

In planning the massive attack on Arab airfields, Israeli strategists employed their own military "manual" which differed greatly from that usually employed by modern air forces. A main feature of the plan was 100% commitment of the Air Force at zero hour, with nothing held in reserve.

Both military and political reasons were behind the Israeli strategy, which was based on the premise that anything short of immediate victory would spell eventual defeat because of the heavy Arab advantage, initially, in aircraft, tanks and troops. A prolonged war would put pressure on Israel because of limited reserves. Approved For Release 2004/05/25 : CIA-RDP69B00369R000200300003-8

to be exercised for a premature truce.

The final argument for full commitment was the Arab pledge, supported by Russia, that the Israelis would not only be defeated but annihilated.

Consequently, each Israeli squadron followed a carefully-written battle scenario which provided time for refueling between missions and which avoided redundant attacks as a means of conserving fuel and ammunition. A major effort was made to avoid dogfights, which Israeli planners consider wasteful and indicative of a failure of air supremacy. Fewer than 50 Arab aircraft managed to get into the air to battle the more than 400 Israeli attack planes, and of these about 32 were shot down.

Israeli tactics contrasted sharply with UAR offensive doctrine, which involved holding a portion of its air power in reserve and designating alternate targets. UAR took its tactics directly from Soviet advisers.

Among the aircraft destroyed in the air was the first Soviet Sukhoi Su-7 to be shot down. Its wreckage is being carefully analyzed by Israeli intelligence personnel.

The Su-7s were added to the UAR inventory as recently as April, and reportedly were not yet fully mastered by Egyptian pilots.

Destroyed on Ground

An Israeli Air Force officer said, "A good air force destroys the enemy on the ground. Any destruction in the air is the result of a mistake in tactics." He denied that Israel had bombed any Arab cities with the comment, "Who would waste bombs on that mob?"

He also denied that Israel had developed special avionics to aid the pilots' accuracy. "Our secret weapon is the professionalism of our pilots. It was a wonderful combination of British spirit and American guts," he said.

During the first minutes of the war, Jordanian Hawker Hunters bombed the Israeli coast city of Natanya. Israeli pilots, instead of engaging the aircraft in a dogfight, proceeded to destroy runways at the Hunter base at Mafrak airfield near Amman, forcing the Jordanian pilots to land in Iraq.

After the destruction of the Arab air forces on the morning of June 5, Israeli pilots immediately switched to new tactics of hitting every available military target on the ground with napalm, 20-mm and 30-mm cannon fire, and French C-10 and Israeli 80-mm air-to-surface rockets. The rockets are similar to the U.S. 5-in. HVAR. The basic mission was to destroy Egyptian logistics operations in the Sinai desert, with the aim of isolating pockets of enemy armor so that the outnumbered Israeli them.

During the first two days of the war, air action was maintained around the clock.

Military observers view the brief war as an outstanding object lesson in the value of intelligently applied air power. In destroying more than \$500 million worth of prime Soviet-supplied equipment during the first hours of the war, the Israeli Air Force opened the way for later destruction or capture of an additional \$1.5 billion in weapons supplied by the Soviets over the past several years, including the first fully-equipped SA-2 missile site to fall into western hands.

Supremacy Persuasion

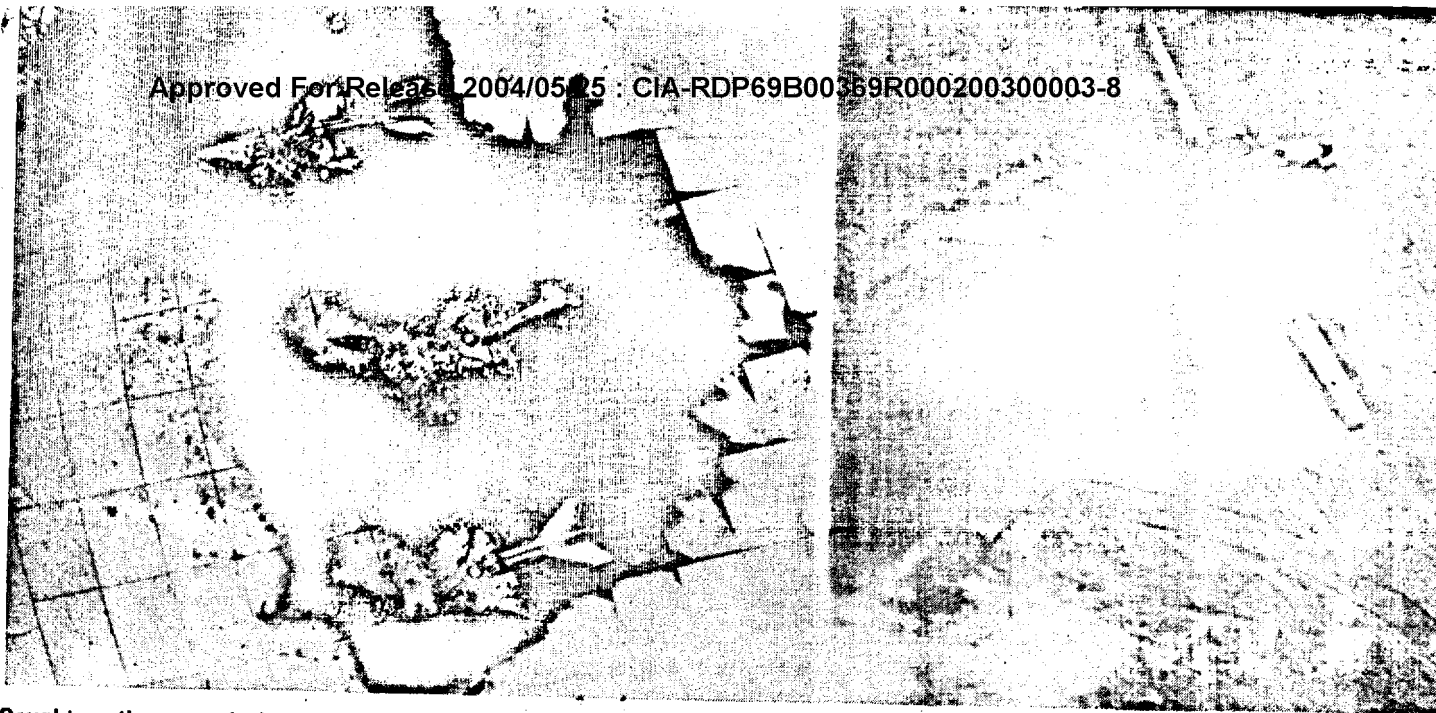
The Israeli government also used its air supremacy for political persuasion when reports reached Tel Aviv that the Jewish community in Beirut, Lebanon, was being subjected to harassment by rioters. The harassment stopped when the Israelis, through diplomatic channels, warned the Lebanese government that certain specified targets in Beirut would be hit by the unopposed Israeli Air Force unless order were restored in those areas.

In the view of political observers, the Israeli victory came as an alarming defeat for world communism. The Russians, who had joined the Arabs in calling for the dissolution of Israel, had been hoping at least to create a crisis which would cause diversion of U.S. resources from Vietnam, and at most to achieve protective status over the entire Arab world.

Before the outbreak of hostilities, Soviet diplomats in Western capitals actively probed to gain information as to what the U.S. response would be to a Soviet show of force in the Middle East. The Russians, meanwhile, had read reports of heavy drawdowns in the U.S. Atlantic Fleet in order to support the Vietnam war and concluded, correctly, that President Johnson would try to avoid committing U.S. troops to the Middle East, even if it meant risking the loss of Israel.

To the Soviets, the ideal situation would have been a slow, grinding tank war in the desert, in which the Arab three-to-one advantage in armor and 40-to-1 advantage in population would eventually wear down the Israelis. Although the Russians did not discount Israeli air power, they expected massive bombing exchanges in which Cairo, Damascus, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Amman would have been hit with great civilian losses.

A U.S. commitment to aid a battered and besieged Israel would have given Russia the opportunity to press for a quick and favorable settlement in both Vietnam and the Middle East. U.S. failure to have involved this country in another indecisive conflict



Caught on the ground, three Russian-made Egyptian MIG-21 fighters (left) were destroyed by an Israeli air strike in early moments of the war. Smoking aircraft at right, also a victim of Israel's initial attack, is a Russian-made Ilyushin II-14 transport.

lasting for years, further draining Washington's resources.

On the other hand, complete renunciation by President Johnson of any obligation to Israel and Israel's eventual defeat would have put Russia in sole control of the Middle East, in the most important balance of power change since the Communists took China in 1949.

But so swift and unexpected was the Israeli air victory that nearly 12 hr. elapsed in Cairo before news of the defeat reached all policy-making levels of government. As a result, the UAR foreign office, without the knowledge of President Nasser, notified the Egyptian ambassador in Moscow to request Soviet support for an unconditional cease fire late in the afternoon of the first day of war.

The Soviets had also received intelligence of the massive Israeli air victory and called an extraordinary night session of the 13-man ruling Politburo for that same day. The Politburo decided that Russia would reverse its UN policy of blocking any Middle East peace moves, and Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Fedorenko was instructed to agree with the U.S. and other western countries on an unconditional cease fire.

Official news of Russia's reversal and its backing by his own government failed to reach the UAR ambassador to the UN until after the vote. Other Arab UN delegates were equally uninformed of the situation.

The intelligence gap, although its basis lay in Arab inability to comprehend Israeli strength, was compounded by gaps in Soviet intelligence as well.

The Russians had refused to permit Israeli military attaches to be at the Moscow embassy since 1949, and Israel had retaliated by barring Soviet military attaches from Tel Aviv. While the Soviet intelligence apparatus was operating in Israel, the Russians were believed to have been deprived of top-level on-the-scene technical evaluations of Israeli military strength.

In the wake of the defeat, the Communist Party Central Committee went into a special session last week in Moscow, at which the 375 members received a background briefing on events for relay to the local level. Reportedly under consideration also was large-scale review of the entire military aid program, with major personnel changes, possibly reaching high into the Foreign Ministry or even the Politburo itself.

Meanwhile, U.S. officials leaked word that both military intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency had expected an Israeli victory based on air supremacy within three days of the outbreak of the hostilities. No such information, however, was passed to either the State Dept. or President Johnson, indicating a breakdown in intelligence channels. The leaks are connected with Administration attempts to regain prestige with the Israelis, who have expressed the feeling that a U.S. military commitment to break the UAR blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba was renounced secretly by President Johnson.

The resultant vacuum in big power influence in the Middle East means that for the indefinite future, Israeli power will remain the dominant force behind any local policy making.

Airlines Reinstating Service to Tel Aviv

New York—Airlines are resuming normal schedules from New York to Tel Aviv amid signs the State Dept. is ready to lift the ban on U.S. tourist travel in Israel.

A ban on travel to Arab countries is expected to remain in effect for the foreseeable future.

Scheduled airline service to and from the Middle East had been halted when war erupted (AW&ST, June 12, p. 42).

Trans World Airlines early last week resumed its daily round-trip service to Tel Aviv, one flight weekly to Tunis and three weekly to Tripoli.

Traffic to Tel Aviv was lower than normal because of the tourist ban and because of apprehension of traveling into the unsettled area, a TWA spokesman said.

The carrier, which normally serves North Africa and the Middle East, is reviewing the status of the area almost daily with the State Dept. with the view toward resuming service in Cairo, Dhahran and Algiers.

Pan American World Airways also is in touch with the State Dept. for permission to schedule its normal 11 daily round-trip flights into Beirut, the carrier's only Middle East destination.

El Al Israel Airlines is now operating one flight a day to Tel Aviv and expects soon to begin its normal 18 flights a week. Most other foreign flag carriers have indicated normal service from New York and European gateways has been resumed.